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46 US firms back action against H-1B rules

Forty-six US firms have filed an amicus brief backing a legal challenge to the new H-1B rules. It comes days after the Trump administration proposed to scrap the computerised lottery system to grant H-1B work visas and replace it with a wage-level-based selection process. The amicus curie states the thrust on higher wages will make it harder to hire skilled foreign workers.

Could tears have been avoided?

Onion price rise may have been controlled if country had adequate storage facilities

KUMAR VIKRAM @ New Delhi

HEAVY and unseasonal rainfall in key onion-producing states has resulted in the staple's prices going north, but if two major central schemes were on track and not progressed at a snail's pace, then the country would have possibly weathered the current crisis.

Government data has revealed that in the past five years, only 34% of the sanctioned cold chain projects were completed while nearly 24% projects were cancelled.

According to the Ministry of Food Processing Industry's submission to a Parliamentary Standing Committee on demand for grants in 2020-21, of the 253 integrated cold storages sanctioned in 2015-16, only 87 were completed while 60 were cancelled. The remaining 106 cold storage projects are in progress.

But even these projects are facing delays. "Projects are delayed due to delay in obtaining statutory approvals like CLU (change of land use), CTE (consent to establish), building plan, power connection, FSSAI licence, final sanction of term loan," the ministry said.

Besides the delay in the cold storage projects, Operation Greens, a scheme for integrated development of tomato, onion and potato, has made a fitful start. A budgetary allocation of ₹500 crore was announced in the 2018-19 Budget, but only ₹5.77 crore has been spent till January this year.

Having a robust cold storage chain is critical for onions, the most market-sensitive agri-commodity known for its huge price volatility. This was stressed in a Reserve Bank of India report in 2018 titled 'A report on the study of onion value chain.'

"The lack of storage facilities is one of the prime reasons behind high volatility in onion prices. Additional storage facilities may be planned to store rabi onion (storage facilities to store at least 25% of rabi onion production need to be ensured in all major onion growing taluks)," the report said.

Why a good network of cold storage facilities is crucial is because of the nearly six-month gap between the rabi and kharif produce. Onion typically is grown three times a year. The early kharif sowing starts in July and is harvested in October. CONTINUED ON: P9

KABUL STEPS UP SUPPLY: P10

Price of humble potato touches ₹65 per kg

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

DON'T be surprised if your favourite samosa or aloo bonda becomes costlier. This is because, the humble potato, the second most essential item in any kitchen after onion, has become dearer. In fact, potato prices are at the highest compared to the last few years.

In most parts of Karnataka, the price of potato ranges between Rs 55 per kg and Rs 65, when compared to Rs 30-Rs 40 in the wholesale yard. Traders from the yards and officials in Hopcoms say that it is the first time in the last two years that the price of potatoes has gone beyond Rs 50. Last year, the prices in the retail market hovered around Rs 45- 50, and in the yards, it was within Rs 30.

While farmers blame the poor yield, traders attribute it to poor transportation and poor quality. However, managing the kitchen budget for homemakers has become a challenge. P7

Multi-specialty hospital must before starting medical college

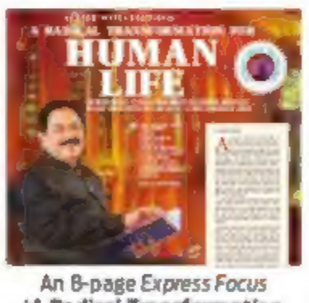
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE government on Saturday announced new regulations to start a medical college, making it mandatory to set up a fully functional 300-bed multi-specialty hospital for at least two years at the time of application for establishing a new medical college.

The norm is part of the "Minimum Requirements for Annual MBBS Admissions Regulations, 2020" notified by the newly-established National Medical Commission. The new norm replaces the "Minimum Standard Requirements for Medical Colleges, 1999," passed by the Medical Council of India.

The earlier regulations did not specify the period of functionality of hospitals for starting new medical colleges. As per the new norms, the beds required in various departments of the teaching hospital have also been rationalised to align with the annual student intake, teaching time to be spent in clinical specialties and the minimum clinical material required for undergraduate medical training.

CONTINUED ON: P9



An 8-page *Express Focus*
'A Radical Transformation for Human Life'
with today's edition

Where Nitish failed to deliver on promise

MUKESH RANJAN @ Muzaffarpur

IF an example of the lack of development and infrastructure in Bihar was to be witnessed, all that is required is a visit to Aurai block, hardly 30 km from the Muzaffarpur district headquarters.

Although Bihar is known for its network of concrete bridges, people living in 70 villages under the Aurai block have to make do with bamboo bridges, called 'chechri pul' in local parlance. While these bamboo bridges are the lifeline for the more than 2.5 lakh villagers, for Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, they are symbols of his failure to deliver.

It is no wonder the lack of development has become an election issue for which Nitish is under attack from his opponents, particularly from Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav. A recent survey by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies and Lokniti, had found that development was the top issue this time around. P9

BJP OPTIMISTIC OF RAJINI SUPPORT

Tamil superstar Rajinikanth may seem ambivalent on his political innings, but BJP general secretary C T Ravi is optimistic of getting his support in that state where the party is looking to expand its base | P7

SEAN CONNERY 1930-2020

The first and finest superspy James Bond

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

LEGENDARY actor, Sir Sean Connery, known widely for playing James Bond, has died at the age of 90, after a prolonged battle with illness.

The actor's tryst with playing Bond began with *Dr. No* (1962), when he was 32, and lasted for as many as seven Bond films. Legend has it that Bond author Ian Fleming, who was initially sceptical of Connery playing the part, was so impressed by the Scottish actor's portrayal that he gave the Bond character Scottish ancestry in his later books.

A poll by a British weekly magazine this year, on the occasion of Connery's 90th birthday, declared him as the best James Bond ever.

The actor's robust physique landed him the role of a battered prizefighter in the 1956 BBC production, *Requiem for a Heavyweight*. His first film to get a theatrical release was *No Road Back*, a 1956 crime movie. A noteworthy performance in the 1961 TV movie, *Anna Karenina*, brought him the attention needed to win a newspaper poll, in which readers were asked to suggest the ideal actor to play James Bond. P11

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ಕನ್ನಡವೇ ಸತ್ಯ
ಕನ್ನಡವೇ ನಿತ್ಯ

ಮುನ್ನೆಚ್ಚರಿಕೆಯ ಮಾರ್ಗಸೂಚಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸುವ
ಮೂಲಕ ಕೋವಿಡ್-19 ನ್ನು ಜಯಿಸುವ
ಸಂಕಲ್ಪ ಮಾಡೋಣ.

ಸರ್ವರಿಗೂ
ಕನ್ನಡ ರಾಜ್ಯೋತ್ಸವದ ಶುಭಾಶಯಗಳು

ಶ್ರೀ ಬಿ.ಎಸ್. ಯಡಿಯೂರಪ್ಪ
ಸನ್ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು

ಕೋವಿಡ್-19 ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಎಚ್ಚರಿಕೆಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಸೇತು ಆ್ಯಪ್ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿ

ಮಾಸ್ಕ್ ಧರಿಸಿ | 6 ಅಡಿ ದೈಹಿಕ ಅಂತರ ಪಾಲಿಸಿ | ಕೈಗಳ ಸ್ವಚ್ಛತೆ ಕಾಪಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಿ

"ಸಮೃದ್ಧ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕತೆಯ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಗೌರವಿಸುವುದು ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಪಾಡುವುದು" -ಪ್ರಕಿರಣವನ್ನು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಂವಿಧಾನದ ಮೂಲಭೂತ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯ

65ನೇ ಕನ್ನಡ ರಾಜ್ಯೋತ್ಸವದ ಈ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರವು,
ಕನ್ನಡದ ಏಳಿಗೆಗಾಗಿ ದುಡಿದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಮಹನೀಯರಿಗೆ ಗೌರವ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ವಾರ್ತೆ
ವಾರ್ತಾ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಪರ್ಕ ಇಲಾಖೆ